

August 15, 2016

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OREGON OPERATIONS OFFICE

SEP 08 2016

U.S. EPA  
ATTN: Harbor Comments  
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500  
Portland, OR 97205

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EPA-REGION 10

Implementing the EPA's proposed plan to clean up the Willamette River is not a risk that should be taken, considering the current state of the economy and of the environment. The revised plan was based upon old information from 2004 and is not current. Things change; the environment changes. An informed decision cannot be made when the EPA is not using current information, and the risk to the environment and local economy would be too great.

The EPA's cleanup plan is too costly and would affect local residents adversely. It would affect how I live my life if taxes and utility rates were raised. Portland's water rates are already among the highest in the nation and I am on a fixed income. Although I have lived in Portland for 24 years, I would seriously consider moving out of Portland if the utility rates went up. It would also affect businesses tremendously and many would likely shut down. People would probably not make the extra effort required to travel to the affected businesses if the easiest routes were blocked. If areas of the river are closed, businesses that rely on it would suffer, and when one area of the economy is affected, all areas are affected. Subsequently, the local economy would take a huge hit.

This dredging plan is significantly more strict and expensive than what has been performed in other areas with similar contamination. This is unfair and wrong, and could be done in much less expensive ways. The EPA should consider more tried-and-true methods that have been proven to work, like allowing the river to naturally recover; this has been shown to have already happened in data from 2014, yet the EPA chooses to disregard it. Natural recovery, along with smaller areas of dredging, has proven to be successful at other sites like this one and should be considered before we risk the EPA's current invasive plan.

Any time is the wrong time to risk negative impacts when you could make a better choice. There are already tried-and-true ways that have been proven to work for decontaminating rivers. Oregon has many other issues that could be a better use of taxpayer money than just the Willamette River. Please consider the less costly and invasive methods before you subject the residents of Portland to this huge and risky undertaking.

Sincerely,

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Portland, OR 97206